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Letter dated 14 April 2014 from the Permanent Representative of Cyprus to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Upon instructions from my Government, I wish to draw your attention to a recent escalation of illegal and dangerous activities of the Turkish air force within the Nicosia flight information region (FIR).

In particular, the Turkish air force has significantly escalated its interference with civilian and military aircraft flying through Cyprus's national airspace and the Nicosia FIR. Military radar operators in Turkey and in the occupied area of Cyprus notify aircraft that they are about to enter the purported "TRNC airspace" and warn them either to communicate with "Ercan air control" and alter their route or risk being intercepted by the Turkish air force.

A recent example of these occurrences is an incident that took place on 1 April 2014, when an Israeli civilian aircraft, which had obtained a diplomatic flight permit from the competent authorities of the Republic of Cyprus and was conducting an aerial photo shoot commissioned by the Department of Lands and Surveys, was warned to abandon the area immediately or risk being intercepted by the Turkish military air force. Following the approach of two Turkish F-16 aircraft at a distance of only a few nautical miles, the Israeli aircraft was forced to land at Larnaca airport.

Similarly, on 3 April 2014, a helicopter of the Cypriot National Guard conducting its daily, routine flight over the area of Mansoura, in the north-western part of the island, was initially warned via radio calls and subsequently approached by two Turkish F-16 aircraft.

These actions constitute further attempts to upgrade the so-called "TRNC" by illegally establishing the division of Cyprus's national airspace and the Nicosia FIR, in defiance of international law and the relevant Security Council resolutions. Furthermore, these illegal practices pose serious threats to air safety and navigation, and needlessly create additional tension at a particularly sensitive time for the negotiation process.

In the light of the above, Turkey should be called upon, once more, to respect international legality, cease all violations and refrain from the harassment of aircraft within the Nicosia FIR.

I should be grateful if you would circulate the present letter as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 42, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Nicholas **Emiliou**